Portraying Inflation in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English Newspapers: A Corpus-Assisted Comparative Discourse Study

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Abstract

This study investigates how inflation is depicted in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English newspapers. For this purpose, the researchers have compiled a corpus of 152,917 tokens retrieved from the official websites of the Dawn (Pakistan) and the Daily mirror (Sri Lanka) newspapers. The data has been analyzed using a mixed method approach through the Sketch Engine software. Moreover, the metaphors used to portray inflation have been categorized into four types as defined by Lakoff and Jhonson: orientational, conceptual, ontological, and structural. However, the statistics indicate that the reporters have effectively used conceptual metaphors (with a frequency of 15 times in Pakistani newspaper and 62 instances in Sri Lankan newspaper) while portraying inflation in their news reports. In addition, the study has also found common discursive patterns and linguistic elements connected to the representation of inflation through keyword extraction, concordance lines, and collocation analysis. It has also been found that the discourse on inflation is shaped by socio-political elements and underlying beliefs. Hence, the findings of this comparative study add to our understanding of how print media in both these countries portray economic phenomena such as inflation, as well as the role of socio-cultural and political factors in shaping economic narratives in various contexts.

Keywords: Inflation, Metaphors, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Corpus, Sketch Engine.

Introduction

Metaphors are critical in expressing the opinion of media reporters regarding inflation. The inflation issue is metaphorically represented in the media and plays a vital role in framing public perception, understanding, and discourse. However, the specific linguistic choices and discursive strategies employed by the Pakistani and Sri Lankan newspaper reporters reveal the underlying ideologies on inflation. One of the practical approaches to investigating lexical choices in discourse is described by Lakoff and Jhonson (1980) as both a normative and systematic approach. According to Lakoff and Jhonson (1980), metaphors are commonly used by people in communication, as well as in the manner of action and thoughts. While writing new articles, journalists use metaphors to create interest in the reader's mind and influence public perspective without the public's knowledge of hidden concepts (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1993). Therefore, one can conclude that metaphors are essential in framing the public mind by playing with words to make comparative concepts. Usually, reporters use figurative language, both subconsciously and consciously. Metaphor is perhaps the type of figurative language that is used most frequently. Metaphors are employed to clarify complex concepts or to make language more engaging (Lindquist, 2009). However, many of the statements that are considered symbolic are used

frequently. For instance, we might not realize that we use the metaphor *TIME IS MONEY* when we say we spend time on something. A metaphor illustrates figurative language related to the metonymy phenomenon. Metonymies are often used by the general public, probably because they are less familiar with this figurative language than metaphor (Schultz, 2012). In a study conducted by Hu and Chen (2015), it was discovered that many metaphorical collocates of inflation can be classified into distinct but interconnected categories. These categories include: inflation as *fire*, inflation as a *disease*, inflation as a *ferocious animal*, inflation as an *ENEMY*, and inflation as a *racer*. The study also highlights how these metaphors operate within particular contexts, shaping and reframing individuals' perspectives on inflation and other interconnected economic ideas. Various research works have been conducted to analyze the function and frequency of metaphors in newspapers reporting inflation. However, little more research has been done on the representation of inflation in developing countries, using Lakoff and Jhonson's theoretical framework (1980) and Fairclough's model. Chunyu and Zhi (2015) analyzed the inflation metaphor in American newspapers by using the theoretical work of Lakoff and Jhonson (1980). However, it does not give any remarkable intuition to study the inflation metaphor in the context of developing countries' press. Therefore, after recognizing the research gap, the research aimed to locate the metaphors used for inflation, frequency distribution, and the linguistic strategies that vary in developing countries' press. This study explores the function and frequency of metaphors in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English newspapers. The main objectives were (I) to recognize the dominant lexical choices and discursive strategies employed to represent inflation in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English newspapers and (II) to analyze the frequency distribution of inflation in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English newspapers.

Literature Review
This study uses Conceptual Metaphor Theory, a.k.a. CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), as its theoretical framework for analyzing corpora.
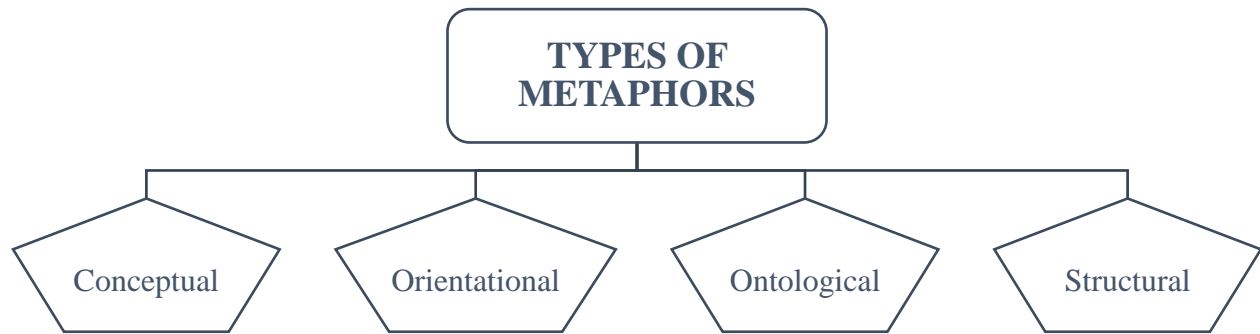
Conceptual Metaphor
Since the time of Aristotle, metaphors have generated much curiosity. The idea that a conceit is a figure of speech, a verbal phenomenon resting on a similarity between the two goods being compared and recognized, employed for aesthetic and rhetorical purposes, is extensively accepted. Conceit is not a necessary element of regular mortal intellect and sense; instead, it is a trick of the lyrical imagination and the rhetorical flourish. Only great muses or conclusive speakers are suitable for learning the use of conceit, which requires a specific gift. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have presented a forceful and regular notice of this hardwired viewpoint. They have made the following arguments:
1. Conceit is a representation of generalities rather than just words.
2. The purpose of conceit is to help people perceive certain generalities rather than just for visual or aesthetic reasons.
3. Conceit is constantly not contingent on similarity.
4. Commoners use Conceits fluently in quotidian life rather than by complete individualities.
Although Lakoff and Johnson (1980) contend that indirectness is a reasonable place to start when looking for metaphor in language, it needs to be broader and more expansive. They have presented a thorough system of metaphor recognition grounded on years of labor: 1) Determine the verbal unit's contextual meaning; 2) determine whether the verbal unit has a more fundamental meaning. However, identify it; 3) check to see if the verbal unit's more introductory meaning and its environment are sufficiently distinct; 4) see if the contextual meaning of the verbal unit can be connected to the further introductory meaning by some other relationship (Steen et al., 2010). The following Figure 1 shows the framework designed by the researchers to categorize the metaphors found during the analysis of this proposed study:

Figure 1: Framework for the analysis of Metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)

TYPES OF METAPHORS

Conceptual   Orientational   Ontological   Structural

Wardhani (2023) advocated researching to identify conceptual metaphors present in Uganda's anti-LGBTQ law. The findings of the data acquired from Reuter and CNN demonstrate that conceptual and ontological metaphors are most often utilized to pique the reader's interest concerning the subject matter being discussed. The term "law" is created using these metaphors since law is a weapon. Sanchez (2023) used computational and corpus-based methods to examine the Spanish Metaphor Detection challenge. First, he compiles and annotates most Spanish-language general-domain literature by hand with metaphorical annotations (Cometa), the most extensive publicly accessible collection. Applying the MIPVU principles to Spanish raises several difficulties, which he thoroughly addresses. These rules created the VUA corpus, English's most popular metaphor corpus. In contrast, he uses CoMeta and Transformer-based multilingual pre-trained language models to test the annotations' accuracy. Researchers interested in using CoMeta or creating their corpora for their target languages can take heart from the comparable performance to that attained with the more extensive English VUA dataset. Taqqiya (2022) examined the metaphors used in Sia's "Alive, Bird Set Free, and Unstoppable" lyrics. This study aimed to determine the different sorts of metaphorical statements that Sia makes and the values that she attaches to them. To begin with, investigating the nature and relevance of the metaphorical terms utilized in Sia's song "Alive, Bird Set Free, and Unstoppable" was the primary objective of this study. During this study, several issues were addressed, one of which was the subject of which kind of metaphors are most frequent in Sia's songs "Alive," "Bird Set Free," and "Unstoppable," in addition to other topical concerns. Firmansyah (2017) studied different types of metaphors in the political news of Jakarta online magazines and newspapers using a qualitative approach. It intends to elucidate the conceptualization and emphasis of politics via these metaphors, finally identifying the specific kinds of metaphors employed in the analysis. The gathered data yields 27 findings, which may be categorized into 19 structural, six ontological, and two orientational metaphors. The findings indicate that structural metaphors are the most frequent among the many kinds of metaphors. In contrast, political metaphors mostly revolve around conflict, rivalry, and travel themes. Furthermore, conceptual metaphors predominantly highlight separate ideas. Chunyu and Liu (2016) in their study revealed metaphorical expressions used for inflation in TIME Magazine Corpus (TMC) using a qualitative approach. In this entirely theoretical piece, inflation is brought to life by employing several metaphorical metaphors. This study intends to use a 450-million-word corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to investigate the inflation metaphor's use, expanding upon earlier investigations that depended on researchers' gut feelings or a small corpus. The results show that inflation has many metaphorical manifestations, which can be grouped into separate but related categories: inflation is fire, inflation is a disease, inflation is an animal, inflation is an enemy, inflation is a racer, inflation is a machine, and so on. Inflation and related economic concepts are shaped and reshaped in different contexts by these metaphors, and our

study elucidates their practical applicability. These findings have important pedagogical implications for the teaching of economics and the development of suitable second-language vocabulary. Chunyu and Chen (2015) identified the metaphors used for inflation in the context of American newspapers using COCA software. According to the researchers, many individuals think that inflation is a dangerous phenomenon that might put the economy of the entire globe at risk. Consequently, it is a phenomenon that demands the continued attention of economists, policymakers, and the general public. This study also reveals that metaphors are used to describe high grades of inflation concretely and show different functions according to the context to make our concept regarding inflation.

Research Methodology
The current study focuses on the frequency of the lemma *inflation*, its function, and its occurrences in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English newspapers. The study used a mixed-method approach to select and analyze the data. The data was analyzed through a software to determine the representation of inflation and its discursive strategies. The corpus for this research was studied using the functional method established by Lakoff and Jhonson (1980). First, the corpus was analyzed quantitatively with the help of Sketch Engine (Kilgariff et al., 2014), which gives statistical findings to examine the frequency of the lemma *inflation* used in Pakistani and Sri Lankan English newspapers. While the linguistic context of the lemma *inflation* enabled the researchers to understand the discourse patterns of the used to portray inflation.

Corpus Design
The corpora for this study comprised of 152,917 tokens. Corpora were collected from January 2022 to 30th September 2023 due to the similar economic issues faced by both countries. The large corpora were collected from the official websites of both newspapers by searching the keyword *inflation*. The collected articles were saved with their date of publication in separate folders for each newspaper (Baker, 2008; Hassan & Anjum, 2024).

Figure 2: Tokens of The Dawn and Daily Mirror Newspaper
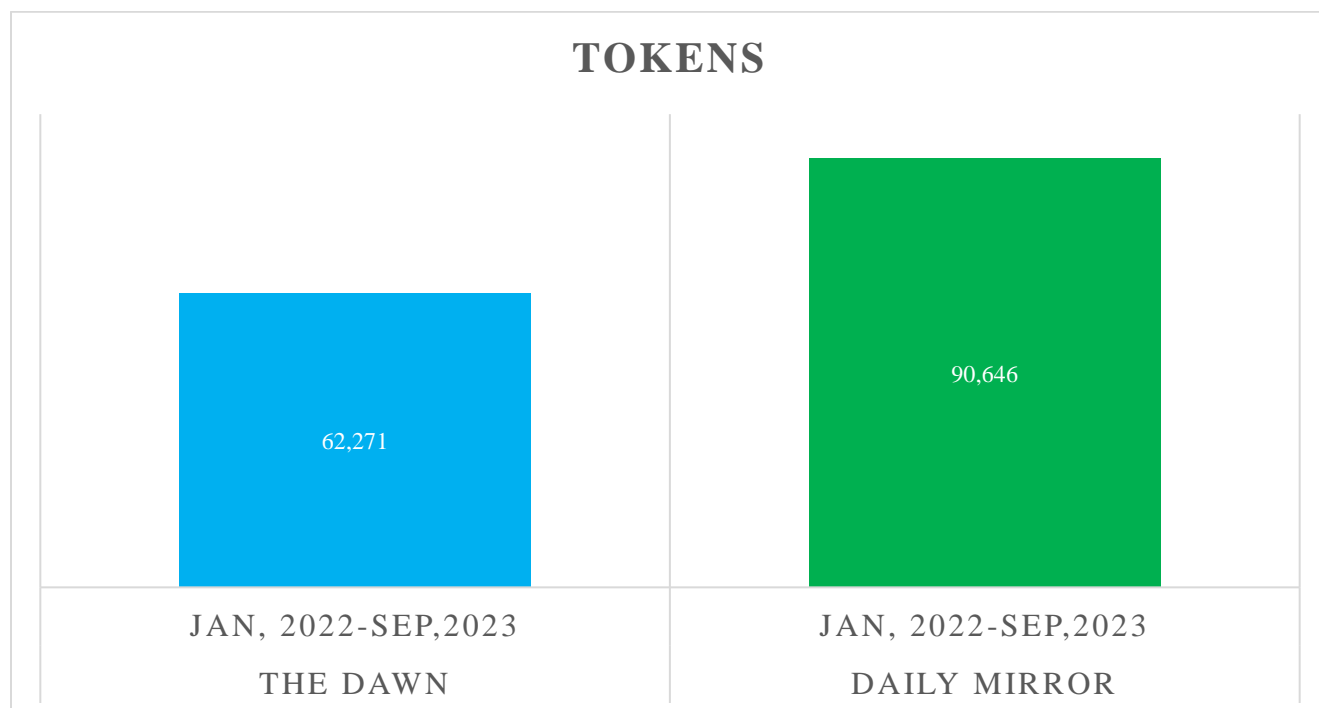
Results and Discussion
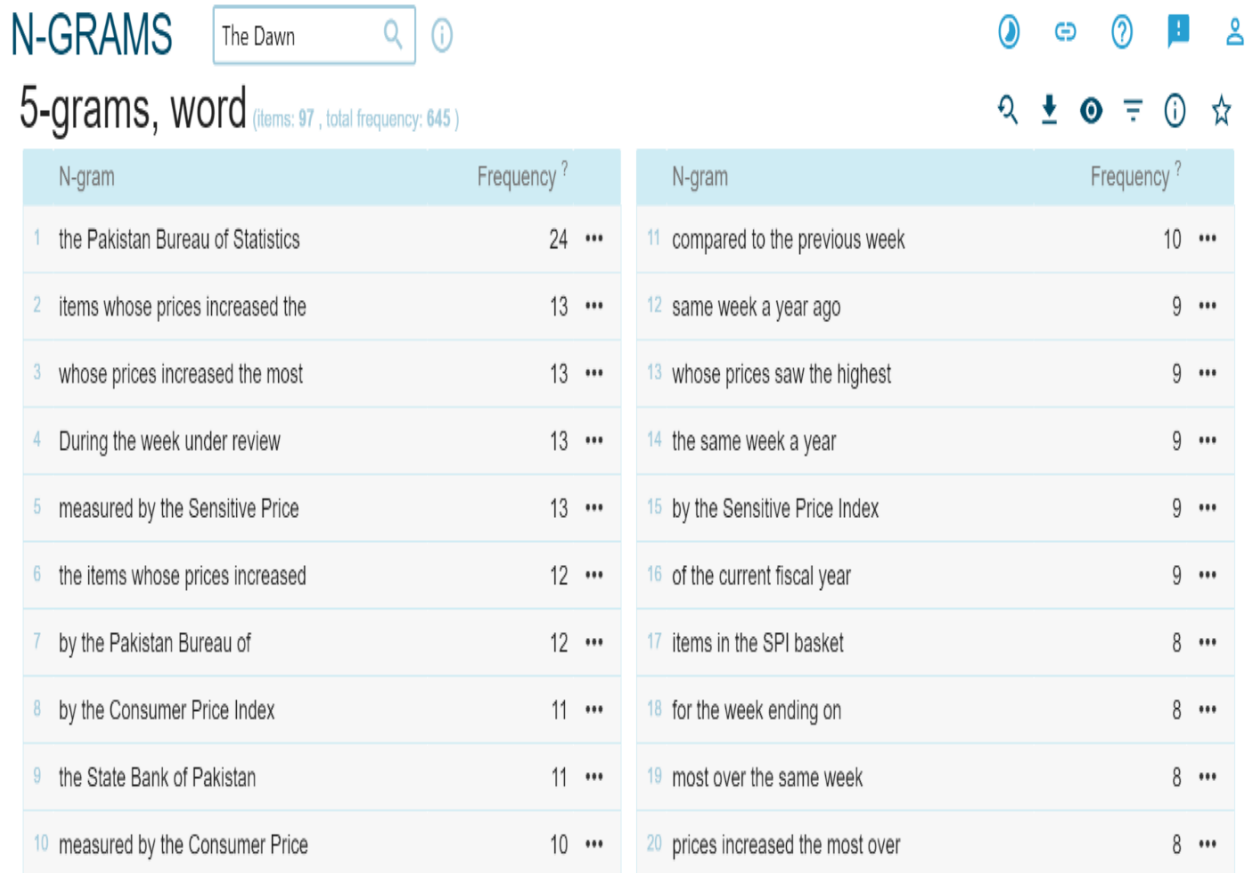
Analysis of the Dawn's Corpus

In general, inflation is a phenomenon that requires the ongoing attention of both those who are specialists in economic matters and the public. This is because inflation is a significant occurrence. Meanwhile, inflation, a very abstract and difficult-to-understand economic event, is often understood as more tangible. An illustration of inflation is seen as a vehicle that is out of control is found in various ways in the following example from The Dawn newspaper:

Figure 3: Thesaurus of inflation from The Dawn Newspaper

In the above figure, different lemmas are used to represent the issue of inflation in the Pakistani newspaper. The most frequent word used with *inflation* is *price* at a frequency of 533, which is a general term used by the audience to ensure a clear understanding. Moreover, the term *year* (90) is used constantly which refers to the highest inflation in these years. Furthermore, the terms *rate* (135) and *growth* (127) were used to show the rising prices of the Dollar affecting the economic growth of the country.

Figure 4. N-Grams of inflation from The Dawn newspaper

N-GRAMS   The Dawn

5-grams, word (items: 97 , total frequency: 645)

N-gram	Frequency	N-gram	Frequency
1 the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics	24	11 compared to the previous week	10
2 items whose prices increased the	13	12 same week a year ago	9
3 whose prices increased the most	13	13 whose prices saw the highest	9
4 During the week under review	13	14 the same week a year	9
5 measured by the Sensitive Price	13	15 by the Sensitive Price Index	9
6 the items whose prices increased	12	16 of the current fiscal year	9
7 by the Pakistan Bureau of	12	17 items in the SPI basket	8
8 by the Consumer Price Index	11	18 for the week ending on	8
9 the State Bank of Pakistan	11	19 most over the same week	8
10 measured by the Consumer Price	10	20 prices increased the most over	8

In Figure 3 the data exhibits that various phrases are used in Pakistani newspapers with the noun *inflation* to trace back its hike and its consequences on the common people. *The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics* stands out with the highest frequency of 24. Similarly, other phrases like *the current fiscal year*, and *the same week a year* are used with the frequency of 9 to measure the inflation rate in terms of time cycle. In addition, the proper nouns of *State Bank of Pakistan*, and *the consumer price index* are widely used at the frequency of 11 to comprehend and track the inflation rate. Other phrases like *compared to the previous week* and *same week a year ago* are used with the frequency of 10 and 9 respectively. These phrases describe the period that could be used to draw comparisons between inflation rates or determine the inflation rates in a country. In other words, phrases like these provide time reference points to analyze the inflation rate. Most of these words and phrases are general and are related to the Jargon of economics which helps the readers to perceive the overall dilemma of inflation in Pakistan.

Figure 5. Bubble chart Thesaurus of inflation from The Dawn Newspaper

In general, adjectives serve various purposes in writing. In the case of newspapers reporting inflation, the newspapers use adjectives to bring clarity and precision to articles, emphasize something, and present the news and information with intensity and appeal to the readers. In addition, adjectives are used to engage the readers and compel them to read. Moreover, newspapers use adjectives to add details to sentences, create appealing effects, shape perceptions, influence decisions, and foster strong relationships. The above figure 5 enlists the adjectives and nouns used with the lemma *inflation* in the Dawn newspaper. Examples like *food Inflation* and *High Inflation* are used to categorize inflation as an ongoing severe issue. Moreover, the use of adjectives helps the writers to carry out fuller and more effective descriptions of inflation. In addition, other adjectives like *average*, *consumer*, and *weekly* are also used to portray the levels and effects of inflation. The analysis also shows that the metaphorical representation of inflation is prevalent in Pakistani newspapers. These metaphors, often rooted in the cultural context of the country, serve the vital purpose of providing a full insight into inflation for the readers. They help to make the complex economic concept of inflation more relatable and understandable. The following section presents a detailed discussion of the metaphors used in the selected newspapers. These metaphors are used with the facts and figures for their true and real manifestations. The researchers have identified the metaphors and described them with their meanings and concepts.

Figure 6. Concordances of inflation from The Dawn Newspaper

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	doc#0	<s>In the fight between	**inflation**	and Pakistanis eating out, who's winning?</s><s>In th
2	doc#0	about the current situation in the country.</s><s>Has	**inflation**	finally managed to keep the middle and upper middle
3	doc#0	sses usually boom, then is it reflective of the changes	**inflation**	has wrought in people's lifestyles?</s><s>With all of t
4	doc#0	ive context, let's talk about the elephant in the room —	**inflation**	.</s><s>Worldwide growth in has compounded high in
5	doc#0	n.</s><s>Worldwide growth in has compounded high	**inflation**	in Pakistan.</s><s>It has been caused by the deterior
6	doc#0	><s>The (PBS) released data recently, indicating that	**inflation**	, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), re:
7	doc#0	ed eating out with family and friends due to the recent	**inflation**	, it reported.</s><s>Inflation is killing restaurants Whil
8	doc#0	friends due to the recent inflation, it reported.</s><s>	**Inflation**	is killing restaurants While people's purchasing power
9	doc#0	otivating to those whose income has been slashed by	**inflation**	.</s><s>We are struggling as a nation," Husain said.<
10	doc#0	lusain said.</s><s>"Given the current price hikes and	**inflation**	, it's very hard for restaurants to give these discounts
11	doc#0	l sales have more or less remained the same, despite	**inflation**	.</s><s>When asked whether he thinks there has bee
12	doc#0	e purchase everything ourselves, so on the cost side,	**inflation**	has really killed us."</s><s>To counter these challeng
13	doc#0	food and the restaurant industry is greatly affected by	**inflation**	, despite having consistent sales.</s><s>"It's not as lu
14	doc#0	s><s>This number has been significantly impacted by	**inflation**	, especially her outings with friends.</s><s>"I would g
15	doc#0	s gotten very less."</s><s>But that doesn't mean that	**inflation**	has had no impact on her choices.</s><s>"You know
16	doc#0	l, adding that even that number has decreased due to	**inflation**	.</s><s>"My sister and I love Wafflix.</s><s>It is a sta

In the above figure 6, inflation has been compared with an elephant and a killer. The killer aspect of Inflation is discussed at both levels, the individual level and at the industry level. It should be noted that the term *killer* is used to portray the havoc and detrimental consequences of Inflation:

Let's talk about the elephant in the room (The Dawn, 17 March 2023).

The elephant in the room is a metaphorical expression and is an orientational metaphor involving directions, physical orientations, and spatial relationships to represent abstract ideas and concepts effectively. In this case, the image of an elephant represents a vast, powerful, and hard-to-control creature holding a space (the room). This image of the elephant points out an important issue that is present but, most of the time, ignored in government policies and planning. The elephant's presence in the room conveys the idea that inflation cannot be avoided, and if so, it would lead to harmful consequences. In other words, it conveys that inflation is a prominent issue in Pakistan and needs attention, even if it is uncomfortable for some to confront and discuss openly.

Inflation is killing restaurants (The Dawn, 12 July 2023)

It is an ontological metaphor in nature that attributes the qualities of one concept to another. In this case, the characteristics of killing (death) are attributed to inflation. It holds the idea that inflation severely affects restaurants and could lead to their demise as an industry. In the context of newspaper reporting inflation this metaphor represents the idea that inflation is not merely an economic condition or concept rather it is a severe threat to the business and the livelihoods of those people who are attached to that specific business or industry. Moreover, it highlights the need to address the pressure which is caused by the inflationary forces.

Inflation has killed us (The Dawn, 12 July 2023)

It employs an ontological metaphor, which helps understand abstract concepts with the help of physical entities or substances. In this case, inflation is equated with a destructive force that causes havoc in society. It suggests that the consequences of inflation are profoundly damaging and need to be considered. If ignored, it would lead to economic casualties for the nation.

Analysis of the Daily Mirror's Corpus

In Sri Lanka, inflation is an imperative economic phenomenon that needs continuous attention from economics experts and the general public alike. Its importance notwithstanding, its abstractness sometimes makes it hard to get a full grasp of it. And, same as how it appears in other places, inflation is often perceived as a power that is out of one's reach and often comes in different forms. This reveals a generally held perception in the sphere of economic conversations in Sri Lanka (Sajid, et al., 2024).

Figure 7. Thesaurus of inflation from the Daily Mirror
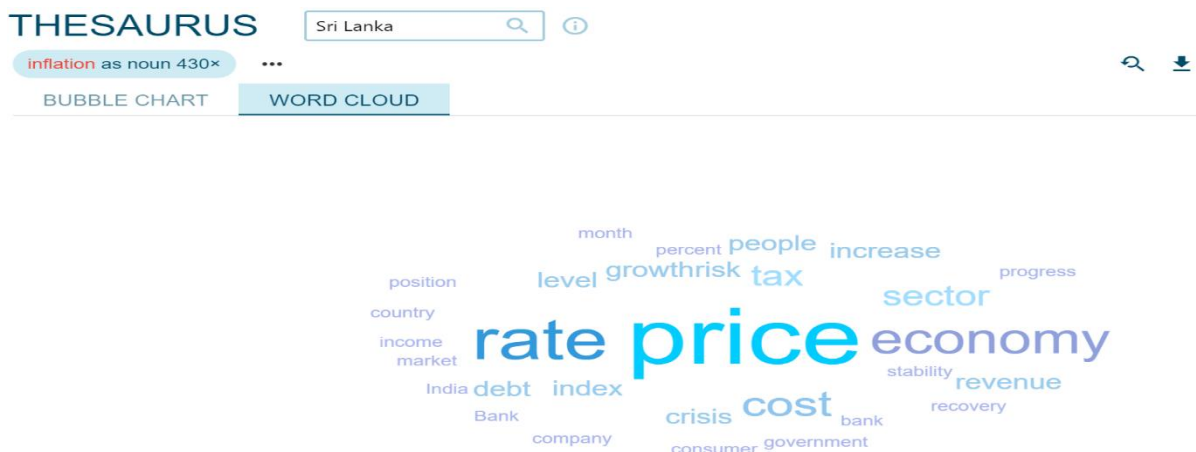
Inflation representation in the Sri Lankan press is expressed with different expressions that feature the economy often. The most frequent word is *price* which is used 309 times and mainly used to describe the hiking prices in the country. *Rate* (271) discusses the rate of Sri Lankan currency in comparison to Dollar and also the increasing rates of gold in the country. *Economy* (210) discusses the downfall of the economy over the years. *Year* (32) designates the years that are related to inflationary acceleration, *Government* (26) shows outcomes of inflation situation which is an example of national challenges. Furthermore, terms such as *rate* (271), *debt* (120), *tax* (110), and *bank* (109) times, referring to the various spheres that inflation has affected.

Figure 8. Keywords in the Daily Mirror

	Term		Term		Term
1	domestic debt	35	foreign exchange	69	mr mnangagwa
2	debt restructuring	36	consumer price	70	bilateral creditor
3	sri lanka	37	debt optimization	71	sign of stabilization
4	lending rate	38	private sector credit	72	fund facility
5	policy rate	39	sector credit	73	brand finance
6	domestic debt restructuring	40	headline inflation	74	global demand
7	external debt	41	monthly price	75	inland revenue department
8	central bank	42	ev battery	76	single digit
9	international monetary fund	43	domestic debt optimization	77	sri lankan
10	sri lankans	44	treasury bill	78	debt burden
11	basis point	45	sri lankan economy	79	foreign exchange reserve
12	rate cut	46	sri lankan rupee	80	exchange reserve
13	food price	47	foreign reserve	81	key interest rate
14	banking sector	48	inflationary pressure	82	inflation expectation
15	economic revival	49	borrowing cost	83	economic stability
16	debt sustainability	50	debt servicing	84	private credit
17	ssb tax	51	debt default	85	rate hike
18	monetary board	52	structural reform	86	commercial bank
19	retirement fund	53	food inflation	87	key interest
20	monetary policy	54	foreign currency	88	export earnings
21	brain drain	55	conducive environment	89	annual inflation
22	imf programme	56	apparel industry	90	economic reform
23	foreign creditor	57	external creditor	91	fiscal consolidation
24	foreign debt	58	relevance score	92	government security
25	economic recovery	59	political stability	93	esg relevance
26	inflation rate	60	non-performing loan	94	esg relevance score
27	base effect	61	superannuation fund	95	ceylinco life
28	colombo consumer price index	62	interest rate	96	deceleration in inflation
29	policy rate cut	63	state minister	97	president ranil wickremesinghe
30	sri lankan government	64	wearing apparel	98	domestic debt optimisation
31	import control	65	import restriction	99	debt optimisation
32	deposit rate	66	crop damage	100	international bondholder
33	economic crisis	67	first review		
34	high inflation	68	sri lanka's debt		

The particular terms like *domestic debt* (45) and *debt restructuring* (37) in Sri Lankan newspapers appeared as a reflection of efforts to manage internal financial obligations and reorganize debt arrangements. Words like *Sri Lanka* (39) and *Sri Lankan government* (38) point to the national setting in which economic situations are discussed. Further, the use of words like *lending rate* (34) and *policy rate* (32) shows the discussion on monetary policy and interest rates which are very important for economic activity. Besides, words such as *economic revival* (30) and *economic recovery* (29) express the undertaking to stimulate development and overcome difficulties. For example, the *inflation rate* (24) and *headline inflation* (23) demonstrate concern over the price trends and the purchasing power of the consumers. Moreover, several other terms such as *foreign debt* (22) and *foreign reserve* (20) are used, which show all the monetary obligations of the country and its involvement in the international financial markets. Additionally, the use of the adjectives such as *economic stability* (18) and *fiscal consolidation* (18) illustrates bigger goals in economic management. Adjectives are used to enhance clarity and precision in these discussions. It is to make sure that readers understand the intensity and the importance of economic issues.

Figure 9. N-grams of inflation from the Daily Mirror

	N-gram	Frequency		N-gram	Frequency
1	the Central Bank	89	26	billion in the	20
2	in Sri Lanka	58	27	in order to	20
3	Sri Lanka has	43	28	is expected to	19
4	International Monetary Fund	42	29	one of the	19
5	the end of	41	30	the banking sector	19
6	as well as	33	31	Central Bank of	19
7	the Sri Lankan	32	32	impact on the	19
8	the International Monetary	30	33	Bank of Sri	18
9	due to the	29	34	cost of living	18
10	in the country	29	35	Central Bank of Sri	18
11	of Sri Lanka	28	36	the domestic debt	18
12	The Central Bank	28	37	of the Central Bank	18
13	the International Monetary Fund	27	38	Consumer Price Index	18
14	a year ago	25	39	for the first	18
15	in the first	25	40	that Sri Lanka	17
16	of Sri Lanka's	24	41	percent in September	17
17	domestic debt restructuring	23	42	percent of the	17
18	from a year	22	43	the previous year	16
19	said in a	22	44	from a year ago	16
20	of the Central	22	45	for Sri Lanka	16
21	Sri Lanka is	21	46	percent in July	16
22	in the economy	20	47	According to the	16
23	of the economy	20	48	the economic crisis	16
24	the cost of	20	49	of the country's	15
25	according to the	20	50	Bank of Sri Lanka	15

The analysis of n-grams in Sri Lankan newspapers shows that there are frequent terms which are proof of major fields and key economic indicators. The most frequent word is the *Central Bank* (89) which is an indicator of its central role in the economic discourse. *Sri Lanka* ranks quite high with 58 times used; suggesting that there is an emphasis on domestic economic issues. *Sri Lanka has* (43) and *International Monetary Fund* (42) are the most frequent phrases that point to an ongoing dialogue about the country's economic status and its financial relations with international institutions. N-grams such as *The end of* (41) and *as well as* (33), which might signify transitions and other factors that are involved in the economic structure. Also, *the Sri Lankan* is mentioned 32 times, maybe about different aspects of the country's economy. Along with economic indicators like the *Consumer Price Index* and *domestic debt restructuring*, whose frequencies were 18 and 23 respectively. Moreover, phrases like *percent in September* (17) and *percent in July* (16) denote a particular period and statistical analyses which ultimately keep readers informed of the happenings in the economy. The phrase *Bank of Sri Lanka* (15) is signifying the presence and situation of Sri Lanka's banking sector repeatedly.

Figure 10. Concordances of lemma *inflation* from the Daily Mirror

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	doc#0	the State Department saying it "took note" of falling	inflation	as well as rising exports and imports in 2023.</s><s
2	doc#0	ind.(</s><s>source: Al Jazeera and news agencies)	Inflation	drops to single-digit levels in July ending near two-y€
3	doc#0	ending near two-year price spiral July YoY headline	inflation	decelerates to 6.3% from 12% in June Monthly price
4	doc#0	10.5% CB unlikely to declare victory over reining in	inflation	as true prices still remain elevated July inflation prin
5	doc#0	ig in inflation as true prices still remain elevated July	inflation	print further galvanise rate cut bets at the upcoming
6	doc#0	Ivanise rate cut bets at the upcoming policy meeting	Inflation	in the Colombo district retreated to what once appea
7	doc#0	once-in-a-generation cost of living crisis.</s><s>The	inflation	measured by the Colombo Consumer Price Index dr
8	doc#0	cent in September.</s><s>The turnaround in official	inflation	back to single-digit levels took 20 months since Dec
9	doc#0	20 months since December 2021 when the Colombo	inflation	rose to 12.1 percent.</s><s>Analysts view achieving
10	doc#0	ent.</s><s>Analysts view achieving a swift return of	inflation	to the desired range as a rare achievement.</s><s>
11	doc#0	anged during the previous two months in a sign that	inflation	impulses have mostly faded.</s><s>The food inflati€
12	doc#0	lation impulses have mostly faded.</s><s>The food	inflation	measured annually decelerated to -1.4 percent in Ju
13	doc#0	nwhile, the so-called core prices which measure the	inflation	barring the most volatile items such as food, energy
14	doc#0	y.</s><s>Core prices are a better predictor of future	inflation	than the headline prices.</s><s>Despite the appare
15	doc#0	es.</s><s>Despite the apparent success in bringing	inflation	back down to the desired range, the Central Bank is

Inflation is declining, amidst trade growth (Daily Mirror, 20 July 2023)

Falling inflation with higher trade is a conceptual metaphorical phrase that refers to the economic movements as a physical state. *Falling* and *rising* show changes in inflation and trade, which are translated into easily understandable episodes or stories for the audience. This metaphor points out the coupling between inflation and trade, making these economic actions much clearer and more logical through familiar pictures (Haffert, et al., 2021).

Inflation is on the decline in July (22 July 2023)

The phrase *July Inflation Declines: July Consumer Price Index* shows the YoY CPI at 6.3% from June's 12%" utilizes the conceptual metaphor approach. It creates an analogy between the drop-in inflation rates as a travel or decline, to interpreting the abstract economic information more concrete. Such a metaphorical symbol enriches the grasp of the intricate workings of economic trends.

Inflation is praised for rare success: swift return to the desired range (Daily Mirror, 05 August, 2023)

The phrase *Swift Return to Desired Range* illustrates a conceptual metaphor. It represents the success of the economy in keeping inflation within the desired range, as does the swift return journey. This allegorical picture is a helping instrument in translating the complexity of stabilizing inflation in given limits.

*Inflation eases Food inflation -1.4% (Daily Mirror, 11 June 2023).*

The phrases *Inflation Impulses Subside* and *Annual Food Inflation Decelerates to -1.4%,* impliedly use a conceptual metaphor. These phrases describe that inflation impulses are like dynamic forces that tend to decrease gradually; thus, they are presented as some physical movements. This

symbolic representation is instrumental in portraying the slowing-down inflationary momentum in the years to come (Koester, et al., 2021).

Comparison of Inflation as a Metaphor Dawn and Daily Mirror
Through a comparative analysis of economic discourse on inflation in Sri Lanka and Pakistan, this study highlights that the metaphorical framing plays a vital role in the shaping perceptions. The following figure 11 shows different metaphors appeared in the corpora of both the Pakistani and Sri Lankan print media discourse:

Figure 11:Comparative frequency of the metaphor inflation
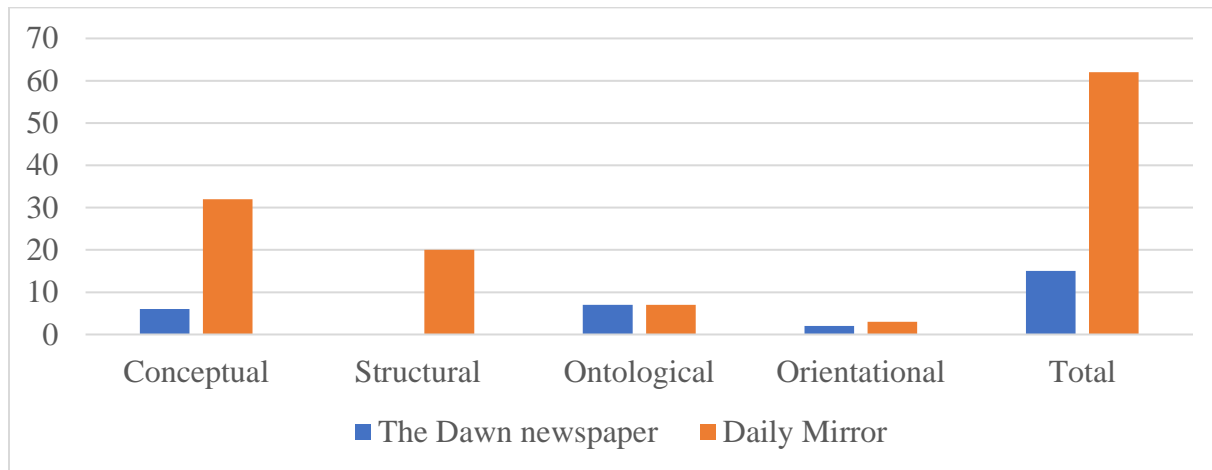
The comparison of metaphor frequency between Sri Lankan and Pakistan newspapers shows the distinctive pattern of metaphorical framing of inflation. There is a considerable number of conceptual metaphors (32 instances) and structural metaphors (20 instances) used in Sri Lankan print media discourse, thus illustrating the intention to attract the readers emotionally and guide them through the economic ups and downs of inflation. In contrast, the Dawn newspaper of Pakistan has more than seven ontological metaphors, ascribing material characteristics to inflation and emphasizing real-world effects. The rather sparing use of structural metaphors in the Dawn implies that a different technique is used for the illustration of inflation as an immediate danger to society. Such metaphorical disparities highlight the cultural and context-related specifics of the national discourse on inflation, forming public opinion and the policy narrative surrounding it.

The inflation analysis put forward by the Dawn and the Sri Lankan newspapers employs the use of metaphors to showcase the negative effects that inflation brings. On the contrary, both newspapers choose different metaphors, global and local emphasis, and extent of analysis.

Table 1: Specific Inflation metaphors in The Dawn and Daily Mirror Newspapers

Metaphors	The Dawn	Daily Mirror
Inflation	Elephant Killer Beast Thorn Endemic Bites Karachi monster	Beast Elusive Dance Dark Shadow Fire Ravenous monster Storm unleashed Bomb Spiral Plight

The analysis of Dawn newspaper mainly dwells on the necessity of tackling inflation in Pakistan in the given context. It applies dramatic and locally recognizable metaphors to stimulate a sense of urgency and engage in the problem immediately. To illustrate how inflation penetrates every seam of the national economy and society, phrases like "the elephant in the room" and "inflation is eating away restaurants" are employed to depict strong vividness and emphasis. Contrariwise, the Sri Lankan newspaper analysis focuses on the global significance of inflation, and not only on its local effects. This is clear in the choice of metaphorical language, such as "inflation is a killer" and "inflation is soaring around the globe." These metaphors portray the multidimensional and global impact of inflation beyond the national boundaries and express its influence on both the domestic economies and the global financial market. Overall, both the newspapers perfectly use metaphor to illustrate the gravity of inflation, but they do it with a different purpose and symbolic language. The Dawn articles revolve around the serious problem of inflation in Pakistan and uses some metaphors reflect the local context so that the present problem is better emphasized. On the other hand, the Sri Lankan newspaper takes an all-encompassing look at the global nature of inflation and the interdependence of countries. Indeed, both methods are strong in their own right. Yet, the readers might feel that The Dawn analysis would be more relevant to their day-to-day troubles while the Sri Lankan newspaper brings about the diverse global aspect of inflation.

Conclusion

This study has undertaken a meticulous comparative discourse analysis of the portrayal of inflation within the English newspaper landscapes of Pakistan and Sri Lanka. By looking deep into the linguistic and discursive strategies employed in news articles addressing inflationary trends the Dawn newspaper's analysis, digs deeply into Pakistan's inflation situation and touches on themes like its influence on business and the difficulties experienced by consumers. Metaphors such as *the elephant in the room* and *inflation is killing restaurants* are used, and they are used with brief explanations that help readers grasp their importance in the context of Pakistani socioeconomics. Conversely, the Daily Mirror focuses mostly on a broad picture of inflation, paying little regard to specific regional factors. Although metaphors like *inflation is a killer* and *inflation is soaring around the globe* are relevant and effectively convey the true threat of inflation, what is missing is a detailed analysis of how inflation affects Sri Lanka and other neighboring countries. Moreover, this study has provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between media, society, and economics in shaping public understanding of inflation. By uncovering the linguistic, discursive, and socio-political factors that influence the portrayal of inflation in Pakistani and Sri Lankan newspapers, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how economic phenomena are constructed and communicated within diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Future Directions

In the future, studies can analyze how metaphors of different types function to deliver economic concepts to varied audiences. Through audience surveys and examining reader responses, it is possible to tell whether metaphors impact how inflation and economic policy are perceived. Furthermore, looking into the role of metaphors in other media channels like social media and visual storytelling could bolster understanding its effect on agenda-setting and policymaking.

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